

# Violence Against Women

<http://vaw.sagepub.com/>

---

## **Varieties of Patriarchy and Violence Against Women: Resurrecting "Patriarchy" as a Theoretical Tool**

Gwen Hunnicutt

*Violence Against Women* 2009 15: 553 originally published online 30 January 2009  
DOI: 10.1177/1077801208331246

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/15/5/553>

---

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

**Additional services and information for *Violence Against Women* can be found at:**

**Email Alerts:** <http://vaw.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

**Subscriptions:** <http://vaw.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

**Reprints:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

**Permissions:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

**Citations:** <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/15/5/553.refs.html>

>> [Version of Record](#) - Mar 27, 2009

[OnlineFirst Version of Record](#) - Jan 30, 2009

[What is This?](#)

# Varieties of Patriarchy and Violence Against Women

## Resurrecting “Patriarchy” as a Theoretical Tool

Gwen Hunnicutt

*University of North Carolina at Greensboro*

Feminist scholars have produced abundant writings on violence against women, yet theory development has stagnated. The effort to construct a theory of patriarchy to explain violence against women was derailed by criticism. In this article, the author addresses some of these criticisms, uncovers the explanatory strengths of this concept, and lays some foundations for a more fully developed theory of violence against women. The concept of patriarchy holds promise for theorizing violence against women because it keeps the theoretical focus on dominance, gender, and power. It also anchors the problem of violence against women in social conditions, rather than individual attributes.

**Keywords:** *feminist theory; patriarchy; violence against women*

The successful work of organized feminist movements has publicly exposed violence against women and influenced social and legal policy (Schechter, 1982). Parallel to this process of consciousness raising, scholars have produced copious volumes of work on violence against women (Renzetti, Edleson, & Bergen, 2001). As a result, this literature is driven primarily by social action and research that contains very little theory (Yllo, 1993). A better understanding of violence against women depends on further development of feminist theory. Although feminist political action is essential, we have not yet fully developed a gender-centered theory of violence against women. Beginning with the pioneering work of Susan Brownmiller (1975), the radical feminist literature on violence against women evoked patriarchy as a theoretical concept. Yet the term *patriarchy* quickly became heavily contested; it was criticized for being “undertheorized” (Kandiyoti, 1988), and the effort to construct a theory of patriarchy to explain violence against women was derailed. Following this widespread critique, the term *patriarchy* was largely abandoned, yet its meanings were imported into terms such as *male-dominated society*, *sexual inequality theory*, and the nebulous *feminist perspectives*. The core concept of patriarchy—systems of male domination and female subordination—continued to appear in the literature in disguised language.

---

**Author’s Note:** The author would like to thank Tom F. Jackson and two anonymous reviewers who provided helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article.

In this article, I join other feminist scholars in maintaining that explanations of violence against women should center on gendered social arrangements and power (R. P. Dobash, R. E. Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992; Mooney, 1992; Yllo, 1993). The concept of patriarchy is especially useful for theory building because the term evokes images of gender hierarchies, dominance, and power arrangements. A theory of varieties of patriarchy would retain gender as a central organizing feature, maintaining a *hierarchical* emphasis and focusing on *social systems* and *social arrangements* that reinforce domination. The concept of patriarchy is also useful in that it keeps the gaze directed toward social contexts rather than toward individual men who are motivated to dominate.<sup>1</sup> Although it is useful for these reasons, the concept of patriarchy has been as problematic as it has been promising. This concept carries a freight of historical “baggage.” Indeed, the limits and usefulness of this concept have been the subject of extensive debate. Prior attempts at theorizing the link between patriarchy and violence against women have been criticized for at least five reasons: (a) The concept simplifies power relations; (b) the term *patriarchy* implies a “false universalism”; (c) the ways in which the concept of patriarchy has been employed have ignored differences among men, casting men instead as a singular group; (d) a theory of patriarchy cannot account for violence by women or men against men; and finally, (e) this concept cannot help us understand why only a few men use violence against women in societies characterized as patriarchal.

In this article, I present an alternative way to understand violence against women by employing patriarchy as a core theoretical concept. But instead of using patriarchy in the conventional ways of the past, I stretch and reshape this concept to bring it in line with contemporary intellectual developments. Because the extensive criticisms of this concept have resulted in the near disappearance of the word *patriarchy* from the literature, I frame each piece of my discussion in terms of its most problematic features. In this article, then, I am responding to the legitimate criticisms waged against the use of patriarchy as a theoretical tool. While addressing these criticisms, I restructure and remake the concept of patriarchy to show how it can be employed to explain violence against women. Although I do not lay out a formal theory in this article, my goal is to resurrect the concept of patriarchy, expose its explanatory strengths, respond to critiques, and lay some foundations for a more fully developed theory of violence against women. In constructing this argument, I have drawn widely on various feminist perspectives, synthesizing ideas from radical, Marxist, postmodern, ecofeminist, critical, and psychoanalytic feminist scholars. I focus on gendered dominance in particular, unearthing some of the complexities of this social feature. The five key components of my argument can be summarized as follows:

- A theory of violence against women has to account for *varieties in patriarchal structures*—that is, a range of different patriarchal manifestations among cultures and clans.

- Men's violence toward women is a product of social structural conditions. To understand male behavior, it is necessary to reveal *how men are situated in their own scheme of domination*, especially relative to other males.
- A theory of patriarchy must contend with the potential divergence of structure and *ideology*. Varieties of patriarchal ideology may exist apart from structural conditions. Patriarchal ideology may endure despite structural gains in gender equality.
- The concept of patriarchy must be developed together with *other forms of hierarchy* and domination in which it is inextricably embedded.
- There are labyrinths of *power* dynamics in patriarchal systems. Violence against women cannot be understood as a simple formula of "oppressor and oppressed." Patriarchal systems must be envisioned as "terrains of power" in which both men and women wield varying types and amounts of power.

## The Case for a Theory of Patriarchy

Although feminist theories take a number of different forms, there is a common acknowledgement among all that (a) although women and men live intimately, gender is a principal division among members in society; (b) theory should uncover the social sources of gender oppression and inequality; and (c) the patriarchal structures of societies are one of the sources of such oppression (Turner, 1998). Violence against women is one type of oppression that requires its own theoretical explanation. Of the theorizing that has been done from a "gender center," radical feminists have contributed the greatest share of work on violence against women. This group of scholars first promoted the idea that patriarchy could explain male violence against women (Brownmiller, 1975; Caputi, 1989; Firestone, 1972; Griffin, 1971; Millet, 1970; Russell, 1975). Compared with the other aspects of female oppression that have been theorized, such as work, family, and sexuality (Chavetz, 1990; Chodorow, 1978; Oakley, 1974; Walby, 1990), theory development on violence against women has stagnated. In 1993, Bonnie Fox argued that violence against women is "the most poorly theorized of all aspects of gender inequality" (p. 321). Nearly a decade later, in addressing the use of feminist theory to explain crime, Flavin (2001) argued that "feminist perspectives have worked better to criticize than construct core theoretical frameworks" (p. 273). Today, research on violence against women continues to amass at impressive rates, yet theory development remains slow. In the void left by the lack of gender-sensitive theories, mainstream theories of victimization have been employed to explain gender-specific violence. Mainstream theories often strip explanations of their gender coloring, casting perpetrators and victims instead as generic "social units," obscuring the ways in which gendered power arrangements structure human action (R. P. Dobash et al., 1992).

The theories commonly evoked to explain violence against women either are gender blind or minimize gender as an explanatory factor. Theories often used in explaining violence against women are general systems theory, resource theory, exchange or

social control theory, and subculture of violence theory (Jasinski, 2001). The “family violence” approach pioneered by Murray Straus and Richard Gelles incorporates strands of each of these theoretical traditions to explain various types of violence that take place within the family, one of which is violence against women. Researchers working in the Straus and Gelles family violence tradition have produced massive amounts of scholarship.<sup>2</sup> The key limitation of family violence theory is that male dominance is seen as only one contributing variable to violence against women rather than as the central organizing feature. Psychological and other individual-level theories used to explain the victimization of women are limited in that they focus on “sick” people to the exclusion of “sick” social arrangements (Flax, 1993). Exclusive focus on individual characteristics of victim, offender, or situation is problematic in that it conceals the ways in which every act of violence against women is embedded in a larger social organization.

Given that feminist scholars see gender as the primary mechanism of difference and that violence is patterned along gender lines, theorizing should begin by examining the gender social order. Existing theories used to explain violence against women are less informative for their lack of gender focus. Rather than adding gender as one variable in a model, a gender-centered theory would expose how violence plays out in a gendered social context and would permit understanding of the complex ways that gender interacts with other social conditions and processes. Patriarchy is a chief characteristic of social structures but is easily obscured. So pervasive, it is hard to “see” it unless the lens is calibrated to gauge it. In what follows, I begin the process of theorizing from a gender center. The ideas that I present here follow from the belief that the causes of violence against women are to be located in the social. The social is the environment that is external to individuals. Furthermore, my primary objective is to develop an alternative way of seeing how the social is shaped by gender and how this point of view can give us insight into violence against women.

Data consistently show that violent victimization varies dramatically by key characteristics of the victim. For homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery, women’s rates of victimization are much lower than men’s rates. For rape, sexual assault, and domestic violence, however, women’s rates of victimization are much higher than men’s (U.S. Department of Justice, 1996). The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) estimated in 2003 that 90% of rapes were committed against females (Catalano, 2004). These wildly divergent victimization rates for men’s and women’s violent death and rape are rarely in dispute. Researchers, however, are in disagreement over the gender distribution of intimate partner violence.

The NCVS finds that around 85% of all intimate partner violence is committed against women (Rennison & Welchans, 2000). The results of the National Violence Against Women Survey show that women are between 7 to 14 times more likely than men to report serious intimate partner violence (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Results from studies using the Conflict Tactic Scales, developed by Murray Straus

and colleagues, show that there is gender symmetry in spousal violence. That is, when respondents are asked to report on violence that ranges from slapping each other to using a lethal weapon, the results show that women commit almost as much intimate partner violence as men do (Gelles & Loseke, 1993). The “sexual symmetry” findings have been the source of heated debate among scholars. Some of the criticisms waged against this finding are that much of the violence women commit against male partners is in self-defense, that rape is excluded from this survey, that the survey strips the violent incidents of context, and that men’s violence against women is more severe than women’s violence against men (R. P. Dobash et al., 1992).

With the possible exception of intimate partner violence, women’s patterns of victimization look much different than men’s victimization. On one hand, women are particularly vulnerable to rape, sexual assault, and more serious forms of domestic violence. But, on the other hand, compared with their male counterparts, women are less at risk of violent death, robbery, and aggravated assault. Theory needs to be able to explain the patterns of both vulnerability and protection—why women are victimized in some ways but not in other ways.

What emerges from these data is a picture that indicates that victimization falls along gendered lines. Not only are levels of violent victimization different for males and females, but the *context* in which violence plays out tends to differ for males and females as well. When women are killed, the circumstances, relationships, and etiologies tend to be different from when men are killed. When women are victims of homicide, they are more likely to be killed by an intimate partner than are men, and the killing often follows a history of domestic violence. Unlike men, women are most at risk of violence from their heterosexual male partners (R. P. Dobash & R. W. Dobash, 1995; Moracco, Runyan, & Butts, 1998; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; U.S. Department of Justice, 1996).<sup>3</sup> These empirical observations indicate quite clearly that violence against women is a product of a gendered arrangement; that is, when women are targeted in patterned ways that are distinct from other demographic groups, it suggests that they are being targeted precisely because of their gender. The fact that men of every clan and culture victimize women more than the reverse suggests that violence is structured along gendered lines. Theories of violence must be gender sensitive in that they explain this overwhelmingly obvious fact: Taking violence as a whole, men are more likely to commit violence against women than the reverse.

Although *patriarchy* has been variously defined, for purposes of this article, it means social arrangements that privilege males, where men as a group dominate women as a group, both structurally and ideologically—hierarchical arrangements that manifest in varieties across history and social space.<sup>4</sup> There are patriarchal systems at the macro level (bureaucracies, government, law, market, religion), and there are patriarchal relations at the micro level (interactions, families, organizations, patterned behavior between intimates). A family or an academic department might be characterized as patriarchal in structural terms, or an individual might hold patriarchal views. Micro- and macropatriarchal systems exist symbiotically. Interpersonal

dynamics are nested within the macro-level gender order (Blumberg, 1984). Although gender hierarchies are the central organizing feature of patriarchal systems, age, race, class, sexuality, religion, historical location, and nationality mediate gender statuses, assigning males and females varying amounts of social value, privilege, and power.

The line of theorizing the link between patriarchy and violence against women falls squarely within a conflict tradition. Conflict theories emphasize dominance and power relationships. The core assumption of conflict theory is that humans are engaged in a constant struggle for status and are continually working to maximize their advantage. If individuals are pursuing self-interest, then people will necessarily be engaged in struggles over power (Collins, 1975). This basic conflict principle helps us understand both the stratification of society and why violence is an outgrowth of dominance hierarchies. The dominance relationships between men and women, and the violence that arises from them, display a number of unique and complex features, however. Historically, the literature on violence against women presented this relationship far too simplistically.

### **Patriarchy's "False Universalism"**

It is possible to move away from "universalizing theorizing" while still keeping theoretical focus on gender and dominance (Smart, 1989). Although there is a tacit agreement among feminists that male-dominated social order is the key to unlocking understanding of violence against women, the use of the particular term *patriarchy* has been hotly contested. The major reason that some theorists have dismissed the usefulness of patriarchy is because of its false universalism (Beechey, 1979; Connell, 1990). At some point, the term *patriarchy* began to imply a fixed and timeless structure that obscured differences in context and reduced all gender relations into one form. Because patriarchy was frequently constructed in static form, it did not permit variation. Its "apparent" universal feature came to eclipse its "true" multiple shapes and forms.<sup>5</sup>

A cursory glance at the literature would show that there is indeed a multiplicity of connections between variations of patriarchal arrangements and violence against women. For example, wife beating happens more frequently in households where traditional gender roles are strongest (Walker, 1977/1978), suggesting that more extreme patriarchal ideology is connected to domestic violence. Men are not as accountable for victimizing women in societies where gender stratification is most extreme, because authorities are not committed to preventing it, suggesting that women's violence may take distinct forms in overtly patriarchal states (Blumberg, 1979). There is wild variation in violence against women across social space. Dowry murders exist in Hindu countries but not in the United States (Menon, 2003). Rape is significantly higher in the United States than in Britain (Messerschmidt, 1993).



Some historic hunting and gathering tribes have been shown by anthropologists to be rape free (Sanday, 1981). And the spousal ratio of killing varies from 0 in India to 200 in Detroit (Daly & Wilson, 1992), yet every one of these societies can be characterized as patriarchal. A theory of patriarchy and violence against women would need to account for variation across time and space. It would need to be historical, incorporating understanding of how structure and agency, domination and contestation, change and vary. A classification of various empirical configurations shows that violence against women occurs with different forms and frequencies according to “degrees of patriarchy.”

When patriarchy is used simplistically, it obscures the complexity of gender systems, rendering them inevitable and universal. However, if a theory of patriarchy is constructed that theorizes about variation, it has the potential to illuminate different forms of male domination. Nearly two decades after the debate on patriarchy’s false universalism has been taken up in the literature, we have more flexible ways of viewing social arrangements. Postmodernists and poststructuralists have helped us to see society as forever shifting, ambiguous, and fluid (Carrington, 1994). Bauman contends that social order is more of a “flow than a structure” (Daems & Robert, 2007). Patriarchal structures, order, customs, and power are “melting,” continually taking new shapes (Bauman, 2000). Thinking about patriarchal systems as “varieties in movement” steers us clear of essentialist, rigid, and solid ways of thinking about social structures.

In addition to the contributions of postmodernists, feminist historians have helped to steer feminist thought clear of monolithic constructions by documenting historical and cultural variation in patriarchies. By investigating how changing historical situations result in shifts in constructions of gender, feminist historians have revealed the instability of patriarchy over time, as well how these systems are continually reconstructed by social change (Ryan, Walkowitz, & Newton, 1983).

## **Problematizing Male Perpetrators**

Much of the literature on violence against women portrays men as an “unproblematic given,” exempting men from serious study. Early feminist work linking patriarchy to the victimization of women evoked a dichotomous “us versus them” social arrangement, where men consciously used violence as a tool for the social control of women (Brownmiller, 1975; Caputi, 1989; Firestone, 1972; Griffin, 1971; Millet, 1970; Russell, 1975). The core of this argument is that male violence against women serves a dual function: It is a tool to exploit men’s position of advantage and to maintain the patriarchal order. There are three key problems with this argument. First, it is unlikely that men use violence as a tool to reinforce their position of power given that it is actually the least powerful men who victimize women under social pressure to accrue more power and redeem their “wounded masculinity.”<sup>6</sup> Second,



this argument suggests that the problem of violence against women is a result of a collection of violent *individual* men. In reality, the individual behavior of men is conditioned and determined by social structures (Fuchs, 2001), and violent behavior is linked to pathological social arrangements. Third, violence is not needed to uphold patriarchal systems. They are systems that are largely self-sustaining.<sup>7</sup>

Men use violence to maintain their advantage in the most *disadvantaged* situations. The more disenfranchised men are from legitimate positions of dominance, the more they may use violence to reinforce quite possibly the only position of domination available to him. Dorie Klein writes,

Male physical power over women, or the illusion of power, is nonetheless a minimal compensation for the lack of power over the rest of one's life. Some men resort to rape and other personal violence against the only target accessible, the only ones with even less autonomy. Thus sexual warfare often becomes a stand-in for class and racial conflict by transforming these resentments into misogyny. (quoted in Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 116)

Theories of violence against women must focus on male power but via situating that power within a patriarchal order. Those males who occupy a seat at the patriarchal table are less likely to need "violence as maintenance" because their elevated position is sustained in legitimate ways. So in looking at varieties of patriarchy, it is important to see how men are situated in their own scheme of domination relative to males and other groups not defined by gender.

Chodorow (1978) locates the hierarchical aspirations behind masculinities. She suggests that men secure masculine identities through prestige and authority. Systems of male domination allow men to demonstrate that they are better than, and different from, women. The higher the prestige that is assigned to males, the greater the incentive to reject or break with femininity. For those men who experience "blocked access" to prestige generating opportunities, their "demonstration" of difference may manifest as violence against women. It is a question of distances, then, but not just between males and females. Understanding violence directed at women requires attention to terrains of power that include status distance among males as well as between males and females. Indeed, several researchers have arrived at this conclusion: The victimization of women is more a function of the status of males than of females (Baron & Straus, 1987; Brewer & Smith, 1995; Goetting, 1991).

Socialist and Marxist feminists have theorized widely about the interplay between capitalistic and patriarchal systems (Ehrenreich, 1976; Jagger, 1983). These mutually reinforcing systems of domination structure gender relations in such a way that economic domination takes gendered forms. These interlocking systems of patriarchy and capitalism dictate that males achieve breadwinner status. Male violence against women may be linked to men's inability to fulfill the role of economic provider. Social pressure and loss of hierarchical gains may mean that as men suffer unemployment and economic hardship, tensions between intimates increase. In their

analysis of Canadian femicide data, Gartner and McCarthy (1991) found that the most high-risk situation for women was to be employed with an unemployed husband. Conversely, the safest situation for married women was to be employed with an employed husband. Perhaps the economic insecurity men feel is the undercurrent motivating violence against women. This insecurity arises from the social binds of patriarchies that cast men as dominant, not just over women but over other men and groups not defined by gender. If men are to be superior achievers, providers, and protectors, perhaps violence against women is more likely when dehumanizing labor conditions undermine men's ability to fulfill these social proscriptions.

The radical feminist argument that men use violence against women to uphold patriarchy is difficult to support. This position not only simplifies male perpetrators as tyrannical, power seeking abusers but also overlooks the fact that patriarchal systems can survive without violence. Direct threat and coercion are hardly necessary in a world where gender relations are entrenched and remarkably self-perpetuating. Gramsci (1972) shows how dominance is possible without direct coercion, and violence is needed only when consensual hegemonic orders break down. Hegemony is consensual because ideological domination works through a symbolic climate that engineers consent and docility. In essence, women can be said to be enslaved by ideas that cast their subordination as normal, ensuring quiescence. Violence against women is a manifestation of patriarchal systems and may indeed reinforce those systems, but such violence is rarely used *consciously* by men to maintain gender hierarchies. In other words, violence against women is more a consequence of patriarchies than the cause of them.<sup>8</sup>

## The Disjunction Between Structural Inequality and Ideology

Macro-level studies in search of predictors of violence against women usually argue that gender inequality is the root cause of male violence against women. In these empirical studies, a gender inequality framework is tested using socioeconomic indicators to predict violence against women.<sup>9</sup> My review of the literature turned up 21 studies that test the predictive power of gender inequality on rates of violence against women at the aggregate level. In almost every case, gender equality is measured by socioeconomic indicators (Austin & Young, 2000; Avakame, 1998, 1999; Bailey, 1999; Bailey & Peterson, 1995; Baron & Straus, 1987; Brewer & Smith, 1995; DeWees & Parker, 2003; Dugan, Nagin, & Rosenfeld, 1999; Ellis & Beattie, 1983; Gartner, Baker, & Pampel, 1990; Levinson, 1989; Pridemore & Freilich, 2005; Smith & Brewer, 1995; Stout, 1992; Titterington, 2006; Vieraitis, Britto, & Kovandzic, 2007; Vieraitis & Williams, 2002; Whaley, 2001; Whaley & Messner, 2002; Yllo & Straus, 1984).<sup>10</sup> As a whole, this body of research shows that

the investigations into the relationship between structural gender inequality and violence against women are mixed, with the results showing that increases in gender equality either (a) are associated with the decrease of violence against women (i.e., as women's status improves, women are safer) or (b) result in higher rates of violence against women (i.e., as women gain equality with men, they are victimized at higher rates). This outcome is termed the "backlash" hypothesis, where men are threatened by women's liberation and react to their prosperity with increasing violence to reclaim their diminishing power.<sup>11</sup> Alternatively, (c) the results show that gender equality variables have little or no explanatory value.

Why is there not a straightforward relationship between gender equality and victimization of women? One possibility is that these mixed results are due to different measurements of gender equality. But if we assume that these studies have somewhat comparable measures, it is possible that these diffuse findings result from the absence of ideological controls. Varieties of patriarchal ideology may exist apart from structural conditions. Patriarchal ideology may endure despite structural gains in gender equality. Theorizing varieties of patriarchy must contend with potentially divergent ideological and structural conditions. For example, a common line of theorizing is that women can increase their status through their access to resource-generating work and, by extension, increase their well-being and safety (Blumberg, 1984; Chavetz, 1990). However, if the prevailing patriarchal ideology locates women's worth primarily in reproduction and mothering, then increases in resource-generating opportunities (structural status) might reduce the perceived value of women. Or there may be independent variation in some aspects of women's status under patriarchy; status in one sphere (work) may be unrelated to status in another sphere (home). The higher economic status of women will not always correspond to a favorable ideological position.

The economic power that individual women possess does not make them immune to violence, precisely because of the ideology at work in gendered relationships. Consider the situation of wife abuse. Income is logically related to rates of wife abuse because poorer women have fewer means to leave an abusive relationship (Rodgers, 1994). Although this structural observation seems intuitive, there may be a whole ideology at work in abusive relationships that both encourages violent behavior toward women and discourages women from escaping. Because many women are socialized to regard their relationships as a core element of their identity and self-worth, some women may strive to preserve relationships at any cost, even in abusive situations with economic avenues of escape (Ogle, Maier-Katkin, & Bernard, 1995).

Some feminists have been skeptical that efforts to obtain structural equality would reduce women's vulnerability to violence (MacKinnon, 1983). Murray Bookchin (2005) doubted the efficacy of gender equality considering other systems of domination that eclipse women's gains:

There is no reason to believe that a gender integrated police force—or for that matter a gender-integrated army, state bureaucracy, or corporate board of directors (given the very nature of these institutions as inherently hierarchical) would lead to a rational and ecological society. (p. 27)

Marxist feminists, too, maintain that under capitalism, sexist ideologies would persist in spite of greater gender equality (Jagger, 1983). A theory of violence against women necessitates that men's dominance over women be understood in terms of wider matrixes of domination (Hill Collins, 1991) that contain both structural and ideological components.

An exclusive focus on structural gender inequality masks the ways in which male dominance is often dependent on ideologies. Moreover, although structural inequality and ideology are strongly related, and often mutually sustaining, they are not the same thing. Domination of women is not simply a matter of structure or achieving economic equality with men. Income equality is profoundly important and has obvious benefits. But structural inequality is only a feature of patriarchies. Inequality alone cannot account for patriarchal systems. Patriarchal ideologies can even "discount" some of the structural gains of women. In other words, gender ideology that favors gender inequality can diminish the strength of women's structural gains (Blumberg, 1984).

### **Theorizing Varieties of Patriarchy Within a Larger Field of Hierarchy**

One sentiment echoed throughout the literature on violence against women is that theories need to be situated within a broader social context (Rodgers & Roberts, 1995). Gelles's (1993) critique of feminist perspectives on violence is that the "gendered lens" is narrowly focused on issues of patriarchy and control to the exclusion of more general social factors. Furthermore, a lot of survey research on violence against women focuses on individual-level characteristics and family dynamics in isolation from broader social forces.<sup>12</sup> It is clear that gender-specific violence is connected to *general social contexts*, and therefore, a theory of varieties of patriarchy and violence against women should be situated within a larger social milieu (Greenberg, 1993). Because patriarchal systems are bound up with other systems of domination, this concept must be situated within fields of hierarchy where old dominate young, men dominate women, men dominate men, Whites dominate people of color, developed nations dominate developing nations, and humans dominate nature.

Patriarchies serve as models of dominance for other hierarchical institutions. For Erich Fromm (1955), the family is the cultural apparatus that supports other systems of domination. He observed how the state and criminal justice system emulate the patriarchal structure of the bourgeois family. Over time, religion and states have

absorbed much patriarchal authority once monopolized by male heads of families. Most mainstream religions and the state are institutions of dominance that are secured with common patriarchal moral underpinnings. For example, the Hebrew bible gives men moral authority over women and children. The punishment or “just deserts” model in criminal justice is consistent with a patriarchal emphasis on domination and control of those who are weaker. Ecofeminism has been instrumental in exposing the link between the domination of women and the domination of nature. It is no coincidence that the Earth and nature are personified as female and that images of nature are often used as metaphors for femininity (Warren, 2000). Indeed, Peggy Reeves Sanday (1981) found that rape very rarely occurred in societies where nature was held sacred.<sup>13</sup> These structures emulate old patriarchal family systems. All of these institutions share a common theme: authority and superiority over others (Fromm, 1955).

Theorizing varieties of patriarchy within a broader hierarchical framework can explain the common patterns of violence against women in terms of race, class, and age. That Black women experience higher levels of rape (Messerschmidt, 1993) is a reflection of a social hierarchy that is structured by race. The majority of rape victims make less than \$10,000 a year (U.S. Department of Justice, 1996), reflecting a system of economic domination that co-occurs with patriarchy, as well as a long history of racial domination. Violence against women peaks in young adulthood (Schwendniger & Schwendinger, 1981), and teenagers have the highest rates of rape. Age represents a concomitant hierarchy where younger are inferior to older.

These wider hierarchical orders can also illuminate why women often behave in ways that maintain patriarchal structures and ideologies. These cross-cutting hierarchical systems of age, class, and race are aligned with patriarchies. Dinnerstein (1976) pointed out that the systems of male dominance are systems in which both women and men are complicit. She believes that both women and men create and sustain these power arrangements.<sup>14</sup> Enjoying one position of domination, be it by age, race, or class, allies women with patriarchal interests. There are numerous cultures where older women occupy some position of respect and status in their respective patriarchal family systems, creating an incentive to uphold their particular patriarchal ideology (Kibria, 1990). Because any individual, male or female, straddles multiple positions in a landscape of domination, in any given social context, “an individual may be an oppressor, a member of an oppressed group, or simultaneously oppressor and oppressed” (Hill Collins, 1991, p. 225).

## **The Problem of Power in Patriarchal Systems**

Relations of domination are complex. One of the limitations of previous conceptions of patriarchy is that power was conceptualized in a top-down fashion, obliterating the labyrinths of power dynamics that exist in patriarchal systems. Patriarchal systems

must be understood as “terrains of power” (Flax, 1993). In these terrains, both men and women wield varying types and amounts of power. Historically, analysis of violence against women using a patriarchal framework romanticized the oppressed and vilified the oppressor. Male motives were taken for granted as power maintenance, and the structural position of men was simplified and unexamined. Meanwhile, female victims were rendered helpless and powerless. In reality, there are multiple sites of power, and even the most oppressed can alter relations of power.

Under patriarchal orders, there are privileges as well as costs that men and women incur. Different resources of protection and resistance are available to men and women in different social positions. For women of privilege, class confers power on subordinated women. For more disadvantaged women, subordinated status creates opportunities for resistance. Subordinate classes develop creative strategies of resistance and protective mechanisms. Scott’s (1985) work on peasant resistance, *Weapons of the Weak*, reveals a vast repertoire of prosaic, “everyday” strategies that peasants employ against their continued exploitation. The subordination women experience will spawn creative self-protection mechanisms, such as forging informal alliances with other women. Kibria (1990) found that in a patriarchal community of recently settled Vietnamese immigrants, women’s informal networks served as protective forces against abusive domestic male partners. A woman’s “value” is determined by race, class, age, appearance, and reproductive status. Hence, a woman is afforded differing amounts of power depending on her social location in this “matrix of domination” (Hill Collins, 1991). Furthermore, individuals do not acquire a set amount of power and privilege “once and for all.” As women move through the life course, they may acquire more or less power through age, marital status, and/or education. Paradoxically, some of women’s power may come from their associations with men.

One of the complexities of domination is that many women are not victimized *because they are women*. A common patriarchal value is the protection of women. Patriarchal ideologies carve out havens of protection for some women but not others. The protective forces of patriarchies are difficult to talk about because they are typically central to antifeminist ideologies (Chavetz & Dworkin, 1987). But one of the ways to get around any misunderstanding that the protective characteristics of patriarchies are legitimate is to emphasize that norms and actions of protection can also serve as instruments of repression. Women may be both dependent on the mercy of men for protection (which is a position of powerlessness) and subject to their aggression. This is the paradox of protection: Chivalry renders women powerless because accepting protection implies neediness and vulnerability; meanwhile, the threat of being victimized requires acquiescence to the protection men offer. Under patriarchal systems, women are subject to varying amounts of risk and protection.

A theory of varieties of patriarchy can help us to understand why women are victimized as much as why they are not. Aggression is indisputably bound up with masculinity, and so violence against women is often regarded as a natural outgrowth

of men's socialization. R. P. Dobash and R. E. Dobash (1979) write, "Men who assault their wives are actually living up to cultural prescriptions that are cherished in Western society—aggressiveness, male dominance and female subordination—and they are using physical force as a means to enforce that dominance" (p. 24). The problem with this argument is that most men do not aggress against women, even though all men receive similar cultural messages. It is more likely that there is an ambivalence for men surrounding physical force, because it is common for patriarchal systems to embrace contradictory values of valorizing male aggressiveness and disdaining violence against women (Kilmartin & Allison, 2007).

Jody Miller's (2001) ethnographic work on gender and gangs reveals that gender is both a risk factor and a protective factor for girls in gangs. In some ways, girls were sexually exploited because of their subordinated status, particularly when they were "sexed in" to gang membership. Alternatively, because they were girls, they were shielded from some of the more dangerous gang activity, particularly the sort that might result in death. Women who receive protection, too, are conferred with a certain status of "worth." The practice of *Purdah* in some Muslim and Hindu cultures works to seclude women from the sight of strangers through restrictions on women's dress and mobility. The paradox of *Purdah* is that women are simultaneously given the status of a protected group and denied participation in the freedom of everyday life (Cain, Khanam, & Nahar, 1979). Furthermore, not all women are afforded protective status. Women who "violate" the normative standards of female behavior may no longer benefit from the "privilege" of male protection. Thus, the victimization of women is bound up with a protective element in patriarchal relations. Different women experience "degrees of vulnerability" under patriarchal systems.<sup>15</sup>

## Broadening the Scope of Theorizing

A theory of varieties of patriarchy with a widened scope has the potential to explain other forms of gendered violence and nonviolence. One puzzling problem facing criminologists is to explain why women commit so little violence compared with men, particularly given their history of oppression. It is likely that women seek to control and aggress as much as men do, but patriarchal systems direct aggression to play out in gender-specific ways. Gordon (1988), in her historical research on family violence, found that men and women were equally aggressive in marital conflict. But because women had so much more to lose in these relationships than men did, they directed their aggression into verbal and socially manipulative acts. These alternative strategies were intended to challenge men's superiority.

Just as a theory of varieties of patriarchy can explain why women commit so little violence, it can also illuminate why some women *do* commit violence. Violence that women commit against themselves and others can be linked to systems of domination, submission, and resistance. Women killing men may have just as much to do with



patriarchy because these acts tend to be self-defensive (i.e., reactive to this system of oppression; Browne & Williams, 1989). A well-developed theory of patriarchy has the potential to explain a multitude of gendered forms of violence. Adinkrah's (2001) research on violent death in Fiji shows the link between various forms of violent death and extreme patriarchal conditions. This framework explains why unmarried, pregnant Hindu mothers in Fiji take their own life rather than face humiliation, ostracism, and stigma. That women are considered "damaged goods" who have lost their honor is an extreme patriarchal manifestation.

It is almost universally true that men are more likely to be the victims of homicide than are women.<sup>16</sup> Men are much more likely to be perpetrators and victims of violence (generally speaking) than are women. The fact that violence has such remarkably stable gender patterns begs for a gender-centered theory. A theory of varieties of patriarchy may also explain male-on-male violence. Men are under a spell of hegemony that aggravates their own struggle for status with other men. Violence among males is an expression of their struggle for "superiority." Finally, because the study of violence against women straddles a sociology-of-law domain, the theorizing of patriarchy has the potential to illuminate the state's response to violence against women, as well as the criminal justice system's invalidation of their experiences (Connell, 1990; Kelly & Radford, 1996).

## Conclusion

Although the literature on violence against women is abundant, there has been a remarkable absence of theoretical development. One of the roadblocks to such development is that core theoretical concepts easily become reified, eventually rendering ideas so concrete that they become useless. That systems of male dominance somehow contribute to violence against women is uncontested among scholars. What is contested is how these configurations of dominance are named, explained, and further linked to the act of male violence toward females. The concept of patriarchy has been thoroughly challenged and ultimately dismantled. Yet there is a subterranean embrace of this idea as the conceptual properties of patriarchy masquerade under different names throughout the literature.

In this article, I have argued in favor of resurrecting the concept of patriarchy and employing it to theorize violence against women. Yet this concept should be employed carefully, with attention to both its helpful and its problematic features. Clearly, patriarchy takes a variety of ideological and structural shapes across the social landscape. Patriarchies do not exist in uniform and systematic ways but instead vary across time, place, and material contexts. These varieties are forever shifting as power relations change in concert with other key social changes. Violence against women is a product of patriarchal social arrangements and ideologies that are

sustained and reinforced by other systems of domination. Varieties of patriarchy must be understood holistically, then, in terms of interlocking structures of domination. What is needed is theory construction that allows for variation in degrees, types, and dimensions of dominance, power, and resistance.

How then might we proceed from here in developing a theory of varieties of patriarchy and victimization of women? I propose that theory building proceed inductively. In keeping with the feminist tradition of theorizing from the ground up, such an undertaking would begin by mapping varieties of patriarchy. In mapping varieties of patriarchy, we would document their characteristics and dimensions and track how the victimization of women is taking shape across different patriarchal systems. While mapping varieties of patriarchy and the victimization of women, we would be attentive to men's social location. Mapping would capture both the structural and the ideological manifestations of patriarchy, recognizing their link to victimization of women and recognizing the possibility that ideology and structure may not always be in sync. Furthermore, mapping varieties of patriarchy and the victimization of women would focus on overlapping hierarchies such as race, class, and age, noting how these interlocking hierarchies work together. Finally, mapping would document power relations not in a top-down fashion but instead by recognizing multiple "sites" of power.

There are multiple empirical avenues to examine the connection between varieties of patriarchy and victimization of women. At the individual level, empirical inquiry could follow in the Dorothy Smith tradition, where we start with women's experiences to observe micro- and macrosystems in play. At a macro level, researchers could ask, how has the victimization of women changed in societies where female disadvantage has declined? Has the victimization of women changed in societies where patriarchy has taken different forms over time? What are the historical processes by which male dominance is expressed in cultural forms? How does male dominance become institutionalized, and how is this bound up with the victimization and protection of women? How is male dominance perpetuated through different institutional arrangements, and how do such arrangements subsequently lead to victimization or nonvictimization of women?

The construction of solid theory is essential for progress in research, policy, and developing resources for victims. Strong policy is derived from good theory. Over the past 30 years, women's antiviolence movements have been tremendously successful in raising awareness, securing resources, and sensitizing criminal justice practitioners to issues of rape and domestic violence. But these same social movements mobilizing over the issue of violence against women have generally called for a strengthening of law-and-order politics, the sort of "get tough" legislation backed by conservatives (Gottschalk, 2006). This alliance between antiviolence activists and get-tough conservative elites has contributed to increasingly punitive conditions in the United States. Ironically, and perhaps inescapably, the reliance on the state to discipline males can reproduce paternalism as well as systems of domination.

Theory, and the empirical research that follows, has the potential to inform socially progressive and humane policy. Part of this theoretical endeavor must involve explicating the complexities and nuances of the gendered positioning of males. Understanding male violence means exposing how those men who use violence against women are victims of their own culture. It also means exploring men's power as well as powerlessness.

## Notes

1. It is beyond the scope of this article to attempt to explain the foundation and existence of patriarchies. Rather than claim to explain the origin and institutionalization of patriarchies, I focus instead on how violence against women is one of many outgrowths of patriarchal systems.

2. Although this debate is briefly sketched in this article, for further study of this controversy, I refer the reader to Gelles and Loseke (1993); Loseke, Gelles, and Cavanaugh (2004); and Mooney (2000).

3. A National Criminal Justice Reference Service-sponsored report on the prevalence, incidence, and consequences of violence as found in the National Violence Against Women Survey indicated that of women who experienced violent victimization, 64% were victimized by a male intimate partner (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

4. This is my definition of *patriarchy*.

5. My interpretation of this literature is that radical feminists never intended to suggest that gender relations do not change and that patriarchal systems do not vary. In fact, most gender theorists would agree that patriarchy takes varied forms (Walby, 1990). The misunderstanding arose from the lack of theoretical tools that could explain multiple empirical manifestations.

6. Although males who victimize women are found at all socioeconomic class levels, most surveys show that men who victimize women are more likely to be of low economic, occupational, and educational status (Kennedy & Dutton, 1989; Strauss & Smith, 1990).

7. The other key problem with the argument that men consciously use violence to maintain their position of power is that individual men are often unaware of the amount of power they possess. Most men probably carry out violence largely asleep, without a master plan or deliberate intentions. Kimmel (2006) describes the discrepancy between the amount of power held by men collectively and the amount felt by individual men as the "wind chill effect." "It doesn't matter what the actual temperature is; what matters is what it feels like" (p. 218).

8. There are exceptions to this statement. For example, in Algiers, the Family Code of 1984 basically legislated an extreme patriarchal society, which made women minors until marriage and required husbands' permission for women to work. In the case of Algiers, the killing of women was used to reinforce these extreme patriarchal policies (such as shooting women who refused to wear the veil; Skilbeck, 2001). Such an example is a deliberate use of violence against women to maintain patriarchal order. Most interpersonal violence, however, is not likely consciously enacted by males to reinforce their dominance.

9. This body of work employs a gender-equality framework, exploring the extent to which increased gender equality results in a reduction of violence against women. The dependent variables are rape rates, femicide rates, and intimate partner abuse.

10. Only 2 of these 21 studies modeled ideology (Pridemore & Freilich, 2005; Yllo & Straus, 1984). Some studies use absolute-female-status measures rather than gender-equality measures.

11. Sometimes this backlash is considered to be short term (Whaley, 2001). See also Yllo (1983), who finds a curvilinear relationship between wife beating and female status, suggesting that changing social norms result in men using violence as a temporary reaction to their loss of power.

12. The Canadian Violence Against Women Survey and Murray Straus's Conflict Tactic Scales are two of the more common surveys to appear in the literature.

13. See Peggy Reeves Sanday's (1981) work for examples of such societies.

14. This model of liberal "consent" to some extent elides the reality of socialization. Consent is really engineered into our social arrangements—is naturalized and made invisible.

15. Another way that patriarchies can explain why women are not victimized is through the social control mechanisms of patriarchal ideologies. The belief that women need to be protected by men reinforces the notion that there is a reason to remain in fear—that there is a male perpetrator that women need to be protected from. The more women remain in fear (say, of being raped), the more docile and compliant women are and the more men are therefore in control (Stanko, 1985). To the extent that these subtle social control mechanisms work to preserve the social order, violence is unnecessary.

16. For a few exceptions, see LaFree and Hunnicutt (2006).

## References

- Adinkrah, M. (2001). Patriarchal family ideology and female homicide victimization in Fiji. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 32, 283-301.
- Austin, R. L., & Young, K. S. (2000). A cross-national examination of the relationship between gender equality and official rape rates. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 44, 204-221.
- Avakame, E. F. (1998). How different is violence in the home? An examination of some correlates of stranger and intimate homicide. *Criminology*, 36, 601-632.
- Avakame, E. F. (1999). Females' labor force participation and intimate femicide: An empirical assessment of the backlash hypothesis. *Violence and Victims*, 14, 277-291.
- Bailey, W. C. (1999). The socioeconomic status of women and patterns of forcible rape for major U.S. cities. *Sociological Focus*, 32, 43-62.
- Bailey, W. C., & Peterson, R. D. (1995). Gender inequality and violence against women: The case of murder. In J. Hagan & R. D. Peterson (Eds.), *Crime and inequality* (pp. 175-205). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Baron, L., & Straus, M. A. (1987). Four theories of rape: A macrosocial analysis. *Social Problems*, 34, 467-489.
- Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid modernity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Beechey, V. (1979). On patriarchy. *Feminist Review*, 3, 66-82.
- Blumberg, R. L. (1979). Rural women and development: Veil of invisibility, world of work. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 3, 447-472.
- Blumberg, R. L. (1984). A general theory of gender stratification. *Sociological Theory*, 2, 23-101.
- Bookchin, M. (2005). *The ecology of freedom: The emergence and dissolution of hierarchy*. Oakland, CA: AK Press.
- Brewer, V. E., & Smith, M. D. (1995). Gender inequality and rates of female homicide victimization across U.S. cities. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 32, 175-190.
- Browne, A., & Williams, K. R. (1989). Exploring the effect of resource availability and the likelihood of female-perpetrated homicides. *Law & Society Review*, 23, 75-94.
- Brownmiller, S. (1975). *Against our will: Men, women and rape*. New York: Fawcett Columbine.
- Cain, M., Khanam, S. R., & Nahir, S. (1979). Class, patriarchy, and women's work in Bangladesh. *Population and Development Review*, 5, 405-438.
- Caputi, J. (1989). The sexual politics of murder. *Gender & Society*, 3, 437-456.
- Carrington, K. (1994). Postmodernism and feminist criminologies: Disconnecting discourses? *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, 22, 261-277.
- Catalano, S. (2004). *Criminal victimization, 2003*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice.

- Chavetz, J. S. (1990). *Gender equity: An integrated theory of stability and change*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Chavetz, J. S., & Dworkin, A. G. (1987). In the face of threat: Organized antifeminism in comparative perspective. *Gender & Society, 1*, 33-60.
- Chodorow, N. (1978). *The reproduction of mothering: Psychoanalysis and the sociology of gender*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Collins, R. (1975). *Conflict sociology: Toward an explanatory science*. New York: Academic Press.
- Connell, R. W. (1990). The state, gender, and sexual politics. *Theory & Society, 19*, 507-544.
- Daems, T., & Robert, L. (2007). Crime and insecurity in liquid modern times: An interview with Zygmunt Bauman. *Contemporary Justice Review, 10*, 87-100.
- Daly, M. I., & Wilson, M. (1992). Who kills whom in spouse killings? On the exceptional ratio of spousal homicides in the United States. *Criminology, 30*, 189-215.
- DeWees, M. A., & Parker, K. F. (2003). The political economy of urban homicide: Assessing the relative impact of gender inequality on sex-specific victimization. *Violence and Victims, 18*, 35-54.
- Dinnerstein, D. (1976). *The mermaid and the minotaur: Sex arrangements and human malaise*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Dobash, R. P., & Dobash, R. E. (1979). *Violence against wives*. New York: Free Press.
- Dobash, R. P., & Dobash, R. E. (1995). Reflections on findings from the Violence Against Women Survey. *Canadian Journal of Criminology, 37*, 457-484.
- Dobash, R. P., Dobash, R. E., Wilson, M., & Daly, M. (1992). The myth of sexual symmetry in marital violence. *Social Problems, 39*, 71-91.
- Dugan, L., Nagin, D. S., & Rosenfeld, R. (1999). Explaining the decline in intimate partner homicide. *Homicide Studies, 3*, 187-214.
- Ehrenreich, B. (1976, June). What is socialist feminism? *WIN Magazine*, pp. 4-13.
- Ellis, L., & Beattie, C. (1983). The feminist explanation for rape: An empirical test. *Journal of Sex Research, 19*, 74-93.
- Firestone, S. (1972). *The dialectic of sex*. New York: Bantam.
- Flavin, J. (2001). Feminism for the mainstream criminologist: An invitation. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 29*, 271-285.
- Flax, J. (1993). *Disputed subjects: Essays on psychoanalysis, politics and philosophy*. New York: Routledge.
- Fox, B. (1993). On violent men and female victims: A comment on DeKeseredy and Kelly. *Canadian Journal of Sociology, 18*, 320-324.
- Fromm, E. (1955). *The sane society*. New York: Rinehart and Winston.
- Fuchs, S. (2001). Beyond agency. *Sociological Theory, 19*, 25-40.
- Gartner, R., Baker, R. K., & Pampel, F. C. (1990). Gender stratification and the gender gap in homicide victimization. *Social Problems, 37*, 593-612.
- Gartner, R., & McCarthy, B. (1991). The social distribution of femicide in urban Canada, 1921-1988. *Law & Society Review, 25*, 287-308.
- Gelles, R. J. (1993). Through a sociological lens: Social structure and family violence theory. In R. J. Gelles & D. R. Loseke (Eds.), *Current controversies on family violence* (pp. 31-46). London: Sage.
- Gelles, R. J., & Loseke, D. R. (Eds.). (1993). *Current controversies on family violence*. London: Sage.
- Goetting, A. (1991). Female victims of homicide: A portrait of their killers and the circumstances of their deaths. *Violence and Victims, 6*, 159-168.
- Gordan, L. (1988). *Heroes of their own lives: The politics and history of family violence*. New York: Viking.
- Gottschalk, M. (2006). *The prison and the gallows: The politics of mass incarceration in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gramsci, A. (1972). *Selections from the prison notebooks*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Greenberg, D. F. (Ed.). (1993). *Crime and capitalism* (2nd ed.). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Griffin, S. (1971, September). Rape: The all-American crime. *Ramparts*, pp. 26-35.
- Hill Collins, P. (1991). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. New York: Routledge.

- Jagger, A. (1983). *Feminist politics and human nature*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Jasinski, J. L. (2001) Theoretical explanations for violence against women. In C. M. Renzetti, J. L. Edleson, & R. K. Bergen (Eds.), *Sourcebook on violence against women* (pp. 5-22). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kandiyoti, D. (1988). Bargaining with patriarchy. *Gender & Society*, 2, 274-289.
- Kelly, L., & Radford, J. (1996) "Nothing really happened": The invalidation of women's experiences of sexual violence. In L. Kelly & J. Radford (Eds.), *Women, violence and male power* (pp. 19-33). Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Kennedy, L. W., & Dutton, D. G. (1989). Incidence of wife assault in Alberta. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science*, 21, 40-54.
- Kibria, N. (1990). Power, patriarchy, and gender conflict in the Vietnamese immigrant community. *Gender & Society*, 4, 9-24.
- Kilmartin, C., & Allison, J. (2007). *Men's violence against women: Theory, research, and activism*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Kimmel, M. (2006). *Manhood in America* (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- LaFree, G. D., & Hunnicutt, G. (2006). Female and male homicide victimization trends: A cross-national context. In K. Heimer & C. Kruttschnitt (Eds.), *Gender and crime: Patterns in victimization and offending* (pp. 195-229). New York: New York University Press.
- Levinson, D. (1989). *Family violence in cross-cultural perspective*. London: Sage.
- Loseke, D. R., Gelles, R. J., & Cavanaugh, M. M. (Eds.). (2004). *Current controversies on family violence* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- MacKinnon, C. (1983). Feminism, Marxism, method and the state: Toward feminist jurisprudence. *Signs*, 8, 635-658.
- Menon, T. K. (2003). Crime against women in India: Violence within and without. *Philosophy and Social Action*, 29, 17-22.
- Messerschmidt, J. W. (1993). *Masculinities and crime: Critique and reconceptualization of theory*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Miller, J. (2001). *One of the guys: Girls, gangs and gender*. New York: Oxford.
- Millet, K. (1970). *Sexual politics*. New York: Ballantine.
- Mooney, J. (2000). *Gender, violence and the social order*. New York: St. Martin's.
- Moracco, K. E., Runyan, C. W., & Butts, J. D. (1998). Femicide in North Carolina, 1991-1993. *Homicide Studies*, 2, 422-446.
- Oakley, A. (1974). *The sociology of housework*. New York: Pantheon.
- Ogle, R. S., Maier-Katkin, D., & Bernard, T. J. (1995). A theory of homicidal behavior among women. *Criminology*, 33, 173-193.
- Pridemore, W. A., & Freilich, J. D. (2005). Gender equity, traditional masculine culture, and female homicide victimization. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 33, 213-223.
- Rennison, C. M., & Welchans, S. (2000). *Intimate partner violence*. Washington DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Renzetti, C. M., Edleson, J. L., & Bergen, R. K. (Eds.). (2001). *Sourcebook on violence against women*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rodgers, K. (1994). Wife assault in Canada. *Canadian Social Trends*, 34, 3-8.
- Rodgers, K., & Roberts, G. (1995). Women's non-spousal multiple victimization: A test of the routine activities theory. *Canadian Journal of Criminology*, 37, 363-391.
- Russell, D. E. H. (1975). *The politics of rape*. New York: Stein and Day.
- Ryan, M., Walkowitz, J., & Newton, J. (Eds.). (1983). *The doubled vision: Sex and class in women's history*. New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Sanday, P. R. (1981). The socio-cultural context of rape: A cross-cultural study. *Journal of Social Issues*, 37, 5-27.
- Schechter, S. (1982). *The visions and struggles of the battered women's movement*. Boston: South End Press.

- Schwendinger, J., & Schwendinger, H. (1981). Rape, sexual inequality and levels of violence. *Crime & Social Justice*, 16, 3-31.
- Scott, J. C. (1985). *Weapons of the weak: Everyday forms of peasant resistance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Skilbeck, R. (2001). The shroud over Algeria: Femicide, Islamism and the Hijab. In D. Russell & R. Harmes (Eds.), *Femicide in global perspective* (pp. 63-70). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Smart, C. (1989). *Feminism and the power of law*. London: Routledge.
- Smith, D. M., & Brewer, V. E. (1995). Female status and the gender gap in U.S. homicide investigation. *Violence Against Women*, 1, 339-350.
- Stanko, E. (1985). *Intimate Intrusions: Women's experiences of male violence*. London: Routledge.
- Stout, K. (1992). Intimate femicide: An ecological analysis. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 19, 29-50.
- Strauss, M., & Smith, C. (1990). Violence in Hispanic families in the United States: Incidence rates and structural interpretations. In M. A. Strauss & R. J. Gelles (Eds.), *Physical violence in the American family* (pp. 341-368). Garden City, NY: Anchor/Doubleday.
- Titterington, V. A. (2006). A retrospective investigation of gender inequality and female homicide victimization. *Sociological Spectrum*, 26, 205-236.
- Tjaden, P., & Thoennes, N. (2000). *Full report of the prevalence, incidence, and consequences of violence against women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Turner, J. H. (1998). *The structure of sociological theory* (6th ed.) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- U.S. Department of Justice. (1996). *Female victims of violent crime*. Washington, DC: Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Vieraitis, L. M., Britto, S., & Kovandzic, T. V. (2007). The impact of women's status and gender inequality on female homicide victimization rates: Evidence from U.S. counties. *Feminist Criminology*, 2, 57-73.
- Vieraitis, L. M., & Williams, M. R. (2002). Assessing the impact of gender inequality of female homicide victimization across U.S. cities: A racially disaggregated analysis. *Violence Against Women*, 8, 35-63.
- Walby, S. (1990). *Theorizing patriarchy*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.
- Walker, L. E. (1977/1978). Battered women and learned helplessness. *Victimology*, 2(3/4), 525-534.
- Warren, K. J. (2000). *Ecofeminist philosophy: A Western perspective on what it is and why it matters*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Whaley, R. B. (2001). The paradoxical relationship between gender inequality and rape: Toward a refined theory. *Gender & Society*, 15, 531-555.
- Whaley, R. B., & Messner, S. F. (2002). Gender equality and gendered homicides. *Homicide Studies*, 6, 188-210.
- Yllo, K. A. (1983). Sexual equality and violence against wives in American states. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 14, 67-86.
- Yllo, K. A. (1993). Through a feminist lens: Gender, power and violence. In R. J. Gelles & D. R. Loseke (Eds.), *Current controversies on family violence* (pp. 47-62). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Yllo, K. A., & Straus, M. A. (1984). The impact of structural inequality and sexist family norms on rates of wife beating. *Journal of International and Comparative Social Welfare*, 1, 16-29.

**Gwen Hunnicutt** is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her research interests include exploring the connection between gender, age, and victimization; theorizing violence and nonviolence; and studying masculinity, aggression, and empathy in social context. Her most recent paper investigates developmentally specific risk factors of child homicide victimization.